thr@ll

Anarchist news and views from Aotearoa/NZ.....#21 Sep/Oct 2001 FREE

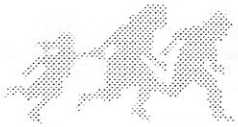
Man Ray, September 1914

anti-wto demos - the "war on terror" - anarchism & violence - and more

no to the wto!

anti-globalisation protests hit aotearoa

Anti-WTO protests were held across Aotearoa and around the world recently to mark the beginning of the latest WTO meeting in Doha, Qatar. Because of the repressive nature of the government of Qatar, the WTO was spared the kinds of protests that disrputed the last meeting in Seattle. Anti-globalisation protestors, however, vowed to keep the pressure up by organising an International Day of Action against the WTO. Below are reports on actions in Christchurch and Wellington.



christchurch

Around 200 people joined the November 9 "Tour of Capitalist Greed" in Christchurch, which has the dubious distinction of being the hometown of WTO Director General Mike Moore.

The day was organised by a broad coalition of , some half-a-dozen Christchurch lefty groups, including everyone from the Anarchist Round Table to Staunch (Alliance youth). Given the range of political ideologies represented, the planning for the event went surprisingly smoothly, although the diversity of groups involved did lead to some mixed messages on the day. On the positive side, people of all ages and types turned up.

An anarchist incites "violence" outside Christchurch's Nike Shop

The day kicked off at noon in the Cashel Mall amphitheatre with a short introductory speech about the WTO by Aziz Choudry of GATT Watchdog. We then marched down to the local Nike Shop, where Mathew of the Anarchist Round Table talked about the conditions workers face in Nike sweatshops in places like China and Vietnam. It was stressed that the exploitation of workers at Nike was not an exception, but rather an example of how all workers around the world are exploited under capitalism. The crowd were then invited to step forward and hurl sponge rubber bricks at the Nike Shop window. Despite the objections of one protestor who considered the action overly violent (!), the shop was subjected to a barrage of spongy projectiles, much to the consternation of the solitary security guard.

Next stop was Telecom, where Murray Horton from CAFCA drew the crowd's attention to the sucking sound he could hear as 98% of the company's profits were being channelled offshore from the ex-state owned entity. There was then a "people's" auction where we tried to buy back Telecom. The highest bid was $20. (We are still in negotiations.)

Our next target was Starbucks, just around the corner in Cathedral Square. After a speech from Trade Aid's Simon Gerathy, everyone was invited to enjoy a cup of "fair trade" coffee, kindly prepared by Food not Bombs.

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Note: The Thrall collective does not necessarily endorse the views of the groups listed below.

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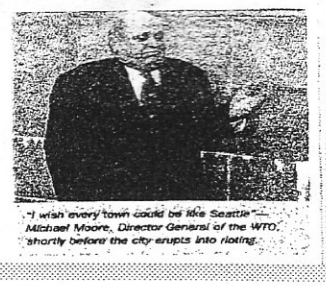


"I wish every town could be like Seattle" — Michael Moore, Director General of the WTO, shortly before the city erupts into rioting.

It was then back to the Cashel Mall amphitheatre and our next target: the WestpacTrust Bank. Predictably, a member of the Alliance used the opportunity to give the new Kiwi Back a plug. Green Party co-leader Rod Donald continued the reformist theme with a lecture on ethical consumerism, while a member of the Young Greens gave out fake twenty dollar bills with a subversive anti-capitalist message on the back!

Overall the Tour of Capitalist Greed was a welcome change from the traditional march and rally. The police presence was minimal, which meant we were able to briefly occupy the Telecom foyer and occasionally spill on to the road as we marched from one venue to the next. There is obviously still a lot of confusion out there as to what anti-capitalism is (it is not about switching loyalties from foreign-owned businesses to locally- or state-owned ones), but hopefully we will have another opportunity soon to set the record straight!

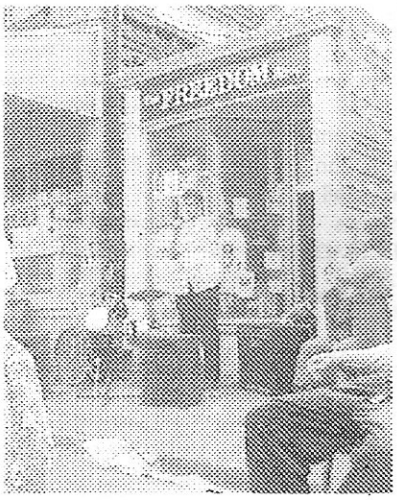
Kerry, Grant F & Mathew

wellington

The Wellington Carnival Against Capitalism was a noisy, fun demonstration held on November 9 to coincide with the meeting of the World Trade Organisation in Qatar. The day consisted of a series of rolling demonstrations. About 150 people attended the carnival, which was a smaller turnout than previous carnivals vs. capital held in Wellington, but nevertheless a good time was held by all. Certainly, we didn't manage to stop capitalism for a day, but at least we managed to temporarily shut down a few capitalist giants in the form of Burger King and McDonald's.

Strangely enough the day began with a small Council of Trade Unions rally in Midland Park, but the CTU did not want to be associated with the carnival, so it was billed as a separate event. All the CTU could offer was a tepid speech by their chief union bureaucrat opposing some aspects of globalisation anyway. Then the carnival moved around the corner to the Ministry of "Defence" to protest against the war against Afghanistan and the sending of NZ SAS troops to fight for the American ruling elite. A few speeches were made, and slogans (unfortunately only in chalk) written on the walls of the ministry.

The next stop was the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, to protest against the proposed Hong Kong Free Trade Agreement. By now the protest was decidedly noisy and emotional, and at least there was a bit of a radical edge to the demo. I can remember only one person speaking about such shit as fair trade, not free trade and most speeches recommended us not to vote, and take control of our communities away from the control of capitalism. As well, a few people made the link between war and capitalists attempting to free up trade for their own profit, as the NZ government is asking for a free trade agreement with the US in return for them supporting their war. After that, we made our way to an anti-Genetic Engineering Rally in Cuba Mall, stopping to protest outside the Business Roundtable, Burger King, Starmart, McDonald's, Nike, Westpac Bank and Starbucks along the way. GE is a big issue in Aotearoa, with mass protests up and down the country against the attempt by capitalists to control and patent our food and life itself.



Outside the Freedom Shop, Cuba Street

Carnival Against Capitalism - Wellington

The day ended with a moderately successful Reclaim the Streets party in Upper Cuba St outside the anarchist bookshop the Freedom Shop, where a punk rock band entertained the crowd. This was the first Reclaim the Streets party held in Aotearoa, and it worked quite well. The "party" was quite lethargic, with people sitting down on chairs in the middle of the street the order of the day, but at least we reclaimed the street for an hour, and the police obliged by redirecting traffic for us. There were no arrests during the protest. The party was held in Upper Cuba St because it is the site of a proposed inner city motorway bypass that may be pushed through in the next year, even though almost everyone in the local community opposes it. It is another example of capitalism at work, with roads pushed through to benefit business to the detriment of local community. So far, the anti-bypass movement is dominated by a mild middle-class group called Campaign for a Better City. The CBC focuses upon lobbying local politicians and legalistic opposition to the bypass. Their idea of action is to send a 1,000 strong march (the largest demo in Wellington for years) to a meeting to be talked at and bored by local body political candidates. This strategy has utterly failed with the election of a pro-bypass mayor. It's time to take more direct forms of action, and the Reclaim the Streets party was an example of this. Onwards to digging tunnels and building barricades!

The weekend before the carnival, an anti-capitalist convergence was held. This convergence was organised by the same loose coalition of anarchists,

student radicals, and left-liberals (some even from the Alliance!!) who organised the carnival vs. capital. About 100-150 people attended various workshops on things like Decolonisation, Bastion Point, Afghanistan, Participatory Democracy, Free Trade, and Anti-Capitalism. A disturbing trend was the attempt by many reformist liberals from groups such as ARENA (Action, Research and Education Network Aotearoa) to move in on the "anti-capitalist movement" and turn it into a movement to reform capitalism!

Against them, one could say: Bollocks to those who prefer fair trade to free trade. We do not want more control over the market, we want its abolition. All markets are based upon our alienation and exploitation. Under capitalism ALL TRADE IS TRADE IN HUMAN MISERY. We spit in the face of those (like the Council of Trade Unions or the Green Party) who wish to represent us. We do not speak or act on behalf of anyone. Representative democracy is a sham, concealing the dictatorship of capital. ALL STATES ARE PRISONS. We do not recognise capitalism in the meetings of the various gangsters like the World Trade Organisation but in the daily robbery of our lives in the offices and factories. OUR CARNIVAL AGAINST CAPITAL DOES NOT HAVE A BEGINNING OR END, it is not a predetermined spectacle, it does not have a fixed date. Our present is an everyday struggle against capitalist bosses and their stooges. Our future lies beyond all mediations, beyond nation-states, beyond all attempts to reform capitalism. Our future lies in the destruction of the capitalist economy.

FOR THE TOTAL ABOLITION OF CAPITAL AND THE STATE. FOR THE WORLD HUMAN COMMUNITY.

Proletarians against the machine

news

christchurch anarchists move into new home...

Christchurch anarchist group the Anarchist Round Table has moved into an office in InterActive, the new activist centre at 222 High Street.

ART was one of several groups involved in setting up the centre, which aims to promote social and environmental activism in the city.

InterActive is used as a meeting space by a number of local groups, and is also home to Christchurch's Indymedia collective.

To find out what's going on at InterActive, visit the website at www.interactive.orcon.net.nz or phone (03) 365 4068.

...wellington anarchists face eviction

Wellington anarchist bookstore the Freedom Shop and several other residences and businesses on Wellington's Upper Cuba St have been served with eviction notices. Residents and busines owners have been told to vacate their premises by January 18, 2002 to make way for the planned Wellington Bypass.

Locals have vowed not to go down without a fight, and have called on supporters around the country to gather in Wellington to join them in direct action against the evictions. Contact CEC for more details.

anti-terrorism bill delayed

Governments throughout the West have been seizing the opportunity presented by the hysteria surrounding the events of September 11 to tighten "anti-terrorist" laws making it easier to clamp down on dissidents and activists. In the UK, for example, authorities will be given powers to imprison suspects without trial.

Here in New Zealand, the lawmakers have had to backtrack after initially trying to rush through secret amendments to the Terrorism (Bombing and Financing) Bill, which was originally introduced in April this year.

After a public outcry, the select committee dealing with the bill decided to remove the very worst changes and call for submissions on the rest, which have now been made public.

The key to the bill is its definition of terrorism, which includes serious interference with or damage or disruption to an "infrastructure facility" or the "national economy" of "any country". This tendency to include economic disruption in the same category as bombings and subversion first appeared in our laws in the SIS Amendment Act 1996. It has been used to justify surveillance and other activities against individuals and groups opposed to the current free-market orthodoxy.

The section dealing with financing, being a member of or recruiting members for "Terrorist or Associated Entities" is also of great concern. As it stands, literally thousands of New Zealanders could have been charged under these provisions if this law had been in place before. Most of the international solidarity groups that have been active in New Zealand in recent years would be outlawed, including Philippines Solidarity, Nicaragua Must Survive, Kanak Solidarity, the anti-apartheid movement, and the East Timor Independence Centre.

Another key feature of the bill is that the Prime Minister has the power to designate an entity as a terrorist as an "interim measure". The PM requires no evidence, but only needs to have "good cause to suspect" the entity of involvement in one or more terrorist acts. After approximately one month, the interim designation (assuming it hasn't been repealed by the PM or revoked on appeal to the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security) can be reissued as a final designation. This can only occur where the PM "believes on reasonable grounds" that the entity has had involvement in one or more terrorist acts. This designation remains for five years unless revoked. To make either an interim or final designation, the PM must also consult with the Minster of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

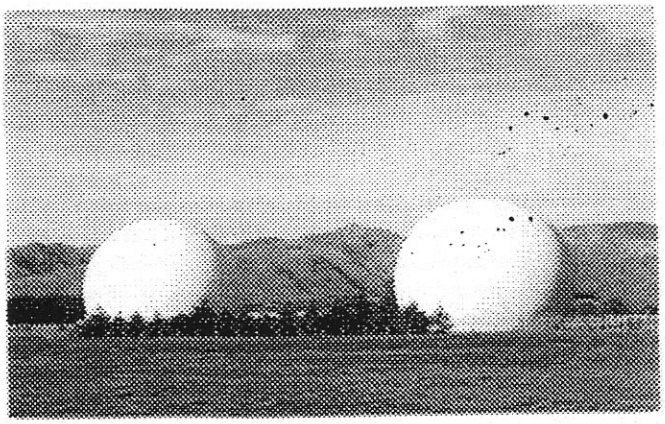
Source: ARENA

waging war on war

Part of the Eurocentric myth is that the world is a better place now than it was a hundred or a thousand years ago. Thanks to Western civilisation, so the myth goes, the world is less brutal and more humane (civilised/progressive). Nobody really believes this, except the extremely naive or those whose interests usually involve power over others – with a monetary gain thrown in. After all, these people say, it's human nature to exploit others, isn't it?

Should it really shock us that a group of terrorists (terrorists and terrorism can be found in the dictionary next to civilised, progress, IBM, and WTO) perpetrated the horrific acts at the World Trade Center? For the past 100 years and since 1948 in particular, thousands of Palestinians have been systematically murdered in successive occupations of their land. The Ottomans with the backing of Germany, the British Imperialists, and the Israeli government with the backing of the United States have all had a hand in this.

Millions have perished around the globe as a consequence of colonialism. People have been brutalised by global capitalism.



Waihopai - possible target for anti-war protests

They have seen their loved ones gunned down on the streets or slowly starved to increase the profits and power of international and local capitalists. Is it any wonder that many of these people react in a brutal manner against those that they see destroying their lives? Put this together with pan-nationalism, religious fundamentalism and an arrogant world superpower and we have the new millennium. Much the same as the old one.

If we want peace then we must fight a war on war and the political and social system that perpetuates it. There can be no peace without social and economic justice across the whole world.

There are many ways we can organise against war. Supporting and participating in pickets and getting people onto the streets on demonstrations is one way. Even petitions have their use, although those in power rarely listen unless threatened. The usefulness of a petition is that it's a way to talk to people. All these methods are important. The important thing is to create methods and structures that allow people to become involved at the level that suits them.

We can also use direct action against those who directly benefit from militarism. These include "defence" manufacturers and universities that support and fund "defence" projects. During the Gulf War and around the time the Anzac frigates were being built there was a lot of research done into New Zealand's small defence industry. Here in Christchurch, Mace Engineering were bidding for defence contracts and were even rumoured to be considering building armoured personnel carriers. There were also some high tech firms around the airport doing defence work for the Americans.

Also we should not overlook the existence of US military bases in New Zealand. The base at Christchurch's Harewood Airport serves more than just the Antarctic. It is also used to supply and support the Pine Gap US satellite ground control station in Australia. Then there is the Waihopai spy base outside Blenheim. So there is no shortage of targets. What is needed is the will and for people to organise actions at a level they feel comfortable with. The rest is up to you.

Frank

national day of action

Anti-war protests will take place around the country on Saturday December 1 as part of a National Day of Action against the war in Afghanistan. In Christchurch, demonstrators will be targeting the US base at Harewood as well as the electoral office of Alliance leader Jim Anderton. For details of events in other parts of the country, check the Peace Movement Aotearoa website at www.converge.org.nz/pma/ or contact one of the groups listed below.

Auckland
Anti-War Coalition: Phone (09) 267 7737
Anti-Imperialist Coalition: Phone 025 280 0080

Wellington
PMA: Phone (04) 382 8129

Christchurch
PAN c/o InterActive: Phone (03) 365 4068

Dunedin
Peace Movement Dunedin c/o Environment Centre: Phone (03) 477 4938

STOP THE WAR

Stop "Operation Infinite Injustice"

bad, badder, baddest

WHO' S THE BADDY NOW?

There's an awful lot of people living in the world today, and it is true that many of them revealed a compassionate nature in the distress they felt for the victims in New York. By contrast, in other, far-flung corners, people in strange costumes danced strange dances in celebration of the deaths, like it was some kind of victory for their cause. However, it has to be said, that for most of the world's population the explosions in America must have seemed very distant and not significant enough to distract them from the roaring troubles and tragedies of their own lives. That so many people did hear about what happened, and were moved enough to care, is due to America's rubbernecking media and its worldwide distribution; unfortunately the suffering inflicted by most of the world's catastrophes is not so thoroughly communicated.

Bad things happen. Some disasters are unfortunate and "nobody's fault". Some disasters are unforeseen but could have been avoided, they involve some structural culpability. But most disasters are made worse because of wilful neglect and outright maliciousness.

When houses collapse like paper during an earthquake it is because they were built for sale and rent, not shelter. When floods wash thousands from their homes it is because industrial agriculturalism requires the removal of all trees. When people are malnourished it is because food is produced to make money and not to feed people. When people live in slums it is because they have been forced off their land by people richer and more powerful than themselves; peasants are brought to the city to be used like raw materials in the factories. When a fire makes a holocaust of a disco, someone has decided not to provide adequate exits, someone has decided to pack the punters in. There is exploitation, profiteering, ripoffs, piracy, theft, enclosure, slavery and then there is war.

We are against the Ten Year War on terrorism. But we are against all wars. We think that all wars end as wars on humanity itself.

We are against the Ten Year War on terrorism whether it is fought militarily, economically or legally. We are against it because it is not a war on terrorism but the continuation of the generalised war on humanity. The new phase in the war has been caused by economic recession and provoked in this instance by a fearful ruling class protecting its self-interest with a military comfort blanket.

Everybody tips the wink at how wars make money and most of us prefer not to consider how national ruling classes do nicely whether their nation wins or loses. Both Japanese and German capitalists went on to work economic miracles out of humiliating defeat, and all they had to do was sign on the dotted line for democratic legitimacy. Political adaptability and willingness to learn new habits earns great rewards – the ruling elites of Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Iran are awaiting the cash benefits of joining the free world's crusade on fundamentalism.

The Ten Year War is not a war of ideas or moral values, it is not for freedom, it is not against terrorism. As the war is set up by the leaders of the World and its supposed enemies we find that we are not for one side or another. We do not intend to judge the horror value of one instance of atrocity against any other. We are not against America, we are not for Islam. We are not in the business of promoting any cultural specificity or national self-determination, we are not hung up on Palestine for the Palestinians any more than we think England belongs to the English (we reject equally the Israeli and Palestinian ruling elites). We are not in favour of the interest of some or other "people" or ethnicity in the Third World as it is presented and interpreted by their wannabe rulers. We are interested in people only so far as they are human beings, human bodies, eyes that weep, mouths that tremble. We do not prefer the tribal, pirate capitalism of the post-Soviet East anymore than that of the synchronised, smooth and nasty domination of the West.

We are not anti-imperialists, we do not believe nation oppresses nation. We do not view the localised tyrannies of the Third World (their use of outright terror; their oppressive cultures of sexism, racism, homophobia; their use of slave and child labour; their corruption, their Caligula-like caprice) as any kind of alternative to Western democracy. We are against all nations and national identities. We are against all religions and cultural oppressions.

We are against this war because we are against all war. We are against war because wars are fought to improve the strategic situation (and thus increase the wealth and power) of the ruling elites that declare them. We are against the ruling elites who declare war. We are against all ruling elites.

War does not stop, it has been going on for centuries. And every few years a new one is declared. And, by process of war, the ownership of the world is secured by an ever smaller number of the competing elites.

The structure and process of ownership is capitalism, its purpose

Stop "Operation Infinite Injustice"

Stop "Operation Infinite Injustice"

is the creation of capital out of the exploitation of humanity. Capitalism is a machine, a machine that operates separately from and opposed to the interests of humanity. T1000s stalk through the chaos. Capitalism makes money from exploitation, it is prepared to use any means, including annihilation, to make money because money is both its only goal and its sole value. Capitalism seeks a world where people exist as economic units. The Ten Year War is a war to kill those who live outside of capitalism, and it is a war to further reduce the free moments of life of those who already live within it.

Capitalism is a machine that operates against the interests of humanity. The Ten Year War is the name capitalism has given itself. Capitalism is indistinguishable from the Ten Year War and The Ten Year War is indistinguishable from capitalism.

The Ten Year War is a ten year plan, a ten year phase in the ongoing discounting of the value of human life as life, and its usurping by the value of life as labour, life as money. It is a ten year war in which the capitalist machine will secure to its interest a further capacity to dominate human existence, it will use the war as justification to reduce wages and living conditions, it will seize any locally accumulated wealth, it will pass laws against resistance to it, it will legitimate local tyrannies that endorse it, it will seek the control of all information about its acts, it will seek to monopolise the deployment of terror.

The Ten Year War has been declared by capitalism to protect the interest of the capitalist ruling elite, it has been declared on terrorism but is in truth a war against the interest of humanity.

The ruling class has declared class war and the world leaders say that the world is never going to be the same again. It is certain that the suffering already present in the world is going to intensify and spread as a consequence of this war.

We, who are against the war, are not going to stop it, just as we are powerless to stop the recession for which the war is an ideological veil. We cannot stop the war because the war is to be waged against the interest of humanity itself. We have no grounds from which we could appeal to the leaders of the world to stop the war because the war is to be waged in the interest of the ruling elite and is against us. The only way we could make them stop it is to offer the interests behind them more treasures than they would make in its execution.

We cannot stop the war. We can only demonstrate our opposition to it. In opposing this war we are demonstrating our opposition to all wars, we are demonstrating our opposition to those who declare war, we are demonstrating our opposition to those whose interest is served by war. In opposing this war we continue to demonstrate our opposition to capitalism.

The anti-war movement has now existed for a hundred years. The anti-war movement has never stopped a war but at least it now sees clearly the link between capitalism and war, and that to be anti-war is to be anti-capitalist. It falls to the anti-capitalist movement to speak the first words of resistance to the Ten Year War. We hope this responsibility will help to mature those who trivialise the struggle by their paramilitary-style, we-rebels-against-the-world, posturing.

We now see that the last war, the war to end all wars, is the war of capitalism against humanity. The resistance to this war fulfils its role only if it argues for the interest of a humanity that has not yet been allowed to come into existence: a humanity without war, oppression or exploitation; a humanity without religion or nation states; a humanity of free individuals, free to live where and how they decide. The objective of the anti-war movement, an objective not remotely within its grasp, is the removing of social power from the interests of capital and relocating it directly into the hands of humanity itself, without mediation or representation.

Political movements will not free humanity from capitalism, that is the task of humanity itself.

We cannot hope to prevail against capital. Bad things are happening and every day thousands die because of the war against humanity, and for each of them life is lost forever. We cannot hope to succeed, that is why we must go on.

Monsieur Dupont and the
D'Arqueness At Noon Group

anti-war, anti-capitalist

An e-group has been set up for people who want to promote anti-capitalism inside the anti-war movement in Aotearoa/NZ.

Those on antiwar anticap nz seek to promote the common class interests shared by workers in New Zealand and the masses of the people of the Middle East – the Palestinians under Israeli oppression, the Iraqis being killed by UN sanctions and the Afghanis being bombed by the Western powers. We seek to build solidarity with the oppressed of the Middle East and promote the view that our enemy is at home – the NZ ruling class – not in Afghanistan.

We seek to link workers' struggles within NZ – for instance, the current pay campaign of our teachers – to the issue of the war, and to promote struggle against our own capitalists who are part of the Western capitalist power structure that plunders the Middle East and oppresses its people.

We want to push for direct anti-war action on the streets and in the workplace; to confront the imperialist policies of the NZ government head-on; and to argue against UN-backed intervention, phoney

Stop "Operation Infinite Injustice"

Stop "Operation Infinite Injustice"

"international law" and starvation by sanctions as alternatives to the present US-led attacks on Afghanistan.

So far the list includes members of the Industrial Workers of the World (Wobblies) from Dunedin, the Anarchist Round Table and *Revolution* from Christchurch, Wellington's Libertarian Communists, and Auckland's Anti-Imperialist Coalition. List members have been active in anti-war protests up and down Aotearoa/NZ. Anyone who wants to bring anti-capitalist politics to the anti-war movement is welcome to join.

The idea for an e-group was raised by some members of the Anti-Imperialist Coalition (AIC) in Auckland, a collection of individuals and groups formed shortly after September 11. Members of the AIC have agreed on a few basic, short-term demands related to the war in the Mideast and New Zealand's role in the US-led coalition. They oppose the sending of NZ troops, call for the withdrawal of the country from ANZUS and the Echelon spy system, demand genuine independence for Palestine, oppose United Nations involvement in the war, call for strike action, mass blockades and mutiny against the war, and want to help set up self-defence groups for minority groups affected by war-inspired racist threats and attacks.

Inside the broad Auckland Anti-War Coalition the AIC has argued successfully against support for UN-sanctioned military strikes, sanctions and "international law" as an antidote to the US-led invasion of Afghanistan. We have also fought for a policy of an open mike and against celebrities and MPs from outside the broad anti-war movement dominating speaking time at rallies.

We have set out to focus on building workers' defence against racism and workers' defence of civil rights in our actions, because we see working class direct action in the street and in the workplace as the key to stopping the war. As well as appearing as a bloc and bringing out our own chants and speakers in broad anti-war marches and rallies, we have organised a number of street meetings in suburbs like Otahuhu and Otara, picketed the Prime Minister over Labour-Alliance's proposed "anti-terrorist" legislation, protested at the High Court over the detention of innocent Afghanis, and put the argument for opposition to the war to a number of union meetings. We are attempting to forge links with anti-imperialist groups overseas, and recently sent a message of support and questions about possible material aid to the Labour Party of Pakistan, an anti-capitalist group organising demonstrations against both fundamentalism and the imperialist war in working class areas of Lahore and Karachi.

You can subscribe to antiwar anticap nz by sending a message to antiwar anticap nz-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Anti-Imperialist Coalition
Phone 025 280 0080
anti imperialist@hotmail.com
Meets 7-30pm Wednesdays
Trades Hall, 147 Great North Rd
Grey Lynn, Auckland

Stop "Operation Infinite Injustice"

the personal and the political

The personal is the political, that famous 70s phrase, has become a much misunderstood statement.

There is a trend among anarchists that has to be challenged. That trend is putting individual ethical consumption choices at the forefront of politics. It's a self-righteous elitism and moralism that not only doesn't win any support but loses it. It draws a straight line where there is in reality no black and white about it. And its conclusions are, in contrast to anarchism, reformist and individual.

Consider this fairly typical extract from the Melbourne IndyMedia website:

> Well last night and i hate to be a nark among the movement.., but last night guess what i saw.....i saw a person with a che t-shirt on eating kentucky fried chicken, then i see another loser, yes a loser coming out of donut king with a thick shake... last but not least, whats the deal with marlboro, marlboro are responsible for more death around the world than any other cigarette, besides the fact that the phillip morris establishment makes the fucking things, this is armageddon people if you can't see that your fucking blind, those socialists are pure hypocrites and if che was still around, no doubt you'd get a thumbs down....also i saw a socialist, at least i think he was a socialist with a bottle of pepsi. GO YOU ANTI-CAPITALIST SOCIALISTS YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF FROM ME AND THE REAL ANTI-CAPITALIST MOVEMENT: THUMBS DOWN.

Or this from the joining form on the Class War (Auckland anarchists) website:

> Have you given up eating meat, fish, & dairy products? Smoke or drink?

If being an anarchist or anti-capitalist means not eating meat or smoking or drinking coke and eating KFC then we may as well all give up now cos the majority of people will treat you with the scorn which that attitude deserves. If that's the dividing line on who's in and who's out of the "movement" then we'll get no-

where. That line of argument is a dead end. Is it ok to be vegetarian but eat chemical food and wear sweatshop clothes? According to some, yes, because eating a dead animal is the line they will not cross. For others it's only eating organic food. Or not being on the dole. But what choice do we have? There are hundreds of decisions to be made about what to buy, wear, eat, etc. Any bold, straight line in the sand is arbitrary and reflects only the priority of the person setting that line. Who's to say that more animals are not harmed bringing soya milk over from Hong Kong than by throwing a fishing line out at the beach? Or that it's better to use a computer for activism than to avoid owning a computer because the parts are made by sweatshop labour?

We can avoid all corporate products – if we're wealthy enough to buy only organic, local, non-exploitative products and only travel by bicycle, or live on a commune and don't go anywhere. But this simply isn't an option for most people. What none of us can avoid is living in a capitalist system. We have to find engaging and insightful ways to challenge exploitation. Putting the pressure on the end user rather than the corporate producer is unhelpful to say the least. That happens to be precisely the individualistic, divide-and-rule philosophy that best suits the suits.

As Michael Albert (Znet and South End Press) says in *WTO, IMF, World Bank and Activism*, published by the CEC:

> The idea that the personal is political should never have become the notion that our personal isolated choices of what to consume or wear define and are the heart of our politics. It was meant to indicate and still has value in indicating that our personal choices are often not near as 'personal' as we think, but, instead, pushed and pulled and coerced and often even enforced by larger social pressure and structures.

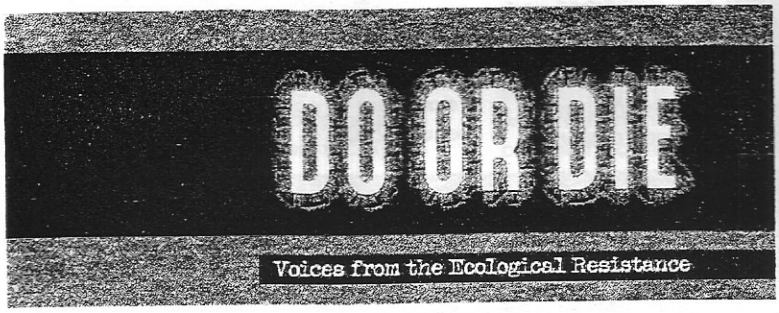
Grant F.

review

GLOBALISATION: ORIGINS – HISTORY – ANALYSIS – RESISTANCE
Published by the Freedom Shop, 2000. Reviewed by Fydd.

If you are looking for an introduction to just what globalisation is from a radical, anti-capitalist viewpoint, then this is the pamphlet for you. This is a superb pamphlet that offers a far deeper and more cutting analysis of globalisation than books like *No Logo* by Naomi Klein. This pamphlet is reprinted from an article which appeared in the excellent English eco-anarchist magazine *Do or Die* in 1999. It was written before the protests against globalisation had erupted onto the stage in the "developed" world after June 18 1999 in London and November 30 1999 in Seattle.

The pamphlet examines the background to globalisation, putting it in historical context as a reaction by capitalists to the resurgence of class struggle in the 1960s and 1970s. It examines the rise of the New Right, and the extensive opposition to it worldwide. Of particular importance is its lucid critique of some of the more reformist opponents of globalisation. It criticises left/liberal academics like David Korten "who use the same categories and assumptions as the capitalists from a negative perspective – they understand the world in the same way, merely believing it needs a bit of tinkering with to set it right". It effectively criticises ideologies that believe the state can roll back globalisation (it points out globalisation has been a state-led initiative, as in Aotearoa from 1984), and see multinational corporations, finance capital or big business as our only enemy. It notes that without a more radical theory and practice we will see the recuperation and neutralisation of the anti-globalisation movement. The problem isn't globalisation, but capitalism.



This pamphlet has been criticised on the Ending Corporate Governance Bulletin Board: "Actually, I often feel that correct, radical analyses are aptly critical, but don't sufficiently develop another positive perspective for the struggles we are in, and therefore lose some impact. A recent, rather extreme, example of this was the Fabel group in Holland, who so soundly criticised reformist conceptions of globalisation that they convinced themselves that there was nothing to be done on the subject and apparently withdrew from the struggle entirely!"

I think this criticism is unjustified. After all, the pamphlet just aims to be an introductory analysis of capitalist globalisation, so it is a bit unfair to claim it does not really offer a positive alternative because that's not what it sets out to do. It does not suggest we should withdraw from the anti-globalisation struggle, but points out there has always been resistance to globalisation: it doesn't see us, as liberals like Jane Kelsey does in her *New Zealand Experiment*, as some sort of passive object which capitalists have experimented upon for the last 15 or so years, but points out there has been ongoing popular resistance to globalisation in the last 15-20 years, such as in Britain in 1984, France 1995 and South Korea in 1996-97. If this resistance broadens and deepens, it could become more radical and revolutionary, offering a viable positive alternative to capitalism.

However, the pamphlet offers only a tantalisingly brief glimpse of what a revolutionary anti-capitalist society could look like. "The abolition of capitalism does not mean taking money from the rich, nor revolutionaries distributing it to the poor, but the suppression of the totality of monetary relations." Here the pamphlet does lack a positive alternative; it would have been helpful to plot out a fairly rudimentary exposition of free, voluntary communism in a few paragraphs, and make it clear this does not mean a totalitarian state as in China but a genuinely classless, moneyless and stateless society run by direct democracy.

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anarchism as the scapegoat of the 21st century

violence, anarchism and anti-globalisation protests

Since hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated in July in Genoa, Italy outside the summit meeting of the so-called G-8 (the seven most powerful capitalist states in the world plus Russia), an unholy alliance of capitalist media, politicians, relief agencies, debt campaigners and even rock "stars" are blaming anarchists for "violence" at anti-globalisation protests. Indeed, anarchism has been called the "hooliganism of the 21st century". The September 11 attacks against the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in the USA have put a new spin on this, with the *New York Times* claiming that smashing windows on anti-globalisation protests is "terrorism" as well. Hang on, smashing a few windows is not the same as murdering over 6,000 innocent people! America's "war on terrorism" will probably lead to a major new global McCarthyite witch-hunt against internal dissent, with anarchism lined up as a likely contender for the scapegoat of the 21st century (after Islamic fundamentalism, that is).

In Aotearoa, our own capitalist media has also stuck the boot in. Since Genoa articles, editorials and opinion pieces have appeared in the *NZ Herald*, *The Christchurch Press*, *The Listener*, *Sunday Star Times* and on the Scoop news website talking of "violent anarchists" who seemingly roam the streets in disorganised mobs, all dressed in black, masked, throwing Molotov cocktails at police, burning cars and smashing windows indiscriminately. A new stereotype of anarchists has been created, away from the black-caped bomb thrower of last century to the masked up window smasher of this century. This article shall briefly look at anarchism and violence, the real role of anarchists and anarchism in the anti-globalisation movement, as well as the real perpetrators of violence in our society. It is intended to be an introductory piece that will try to dismiss a few myths about anarchism and outline the radical potential of the anti-globalisation movement.

STATEMENTS FROM THE BLACK BLOC

It is true that some anarchists have participated in "violence" against capitalist property in anti-globalisation protests in places like London, Seattle, and now Genoa, by smashing windows of big capitalist corporations. This violence was not some teenage temper tantrum, as the media claims, but was a systematic and planned act. "We contend that property destruction is not a violent activity unless it destroys lives or causes pain in the process. By this definition, private property – especially corporate private property – is itself infinitely more violent than any action taken against it." Because the ownership of private property by a select few (the boss class) is the violent basis of capitalism, forcing us to work for the profit of bosses, then "when we smash a window, we aim to destroy the veneer of legitimacy that surrounds private property rights. At the same time, we exorcise that set of violent and destructive social relationships which has been imbued in almost everything around us."

– ACME (anarchist) collective, Seattle, 1999. This collective targeted corporations such as GAP, Nike, Levis, McDonald's, Starbucks, Warner Bros, and Planet Hollywood, as well as banks.

In Genoa, the media demonised the Black Bloc, who were blamed for all of the violence. "Yesterday the police acted brutally against protesters. Protesters were beaten up, were attacked by tear gas and rubber bullets, they were imprisoned and tortured. The police brutality culminated in the murder of one protester [Carlo Guiliani]...Day by day, the capitalist world order produces a diversity of violence. Poverty, hunger, expulsion, exclusion, the death of millions of people and the destruction of living spaces is part of their policy. This is exactly what we reject. Smashed windows of banks and multinationals are symbolic actions. Nevertheless, we do not agree with the destruction and looting of small shops and cars. This is not our policy...If windows rattle then you cry, but you are silent when people die."

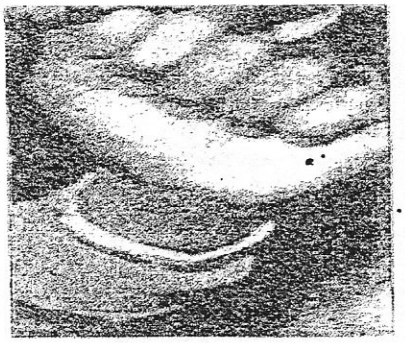
– statement of part of the Black Bloc, Genoa, 2001.

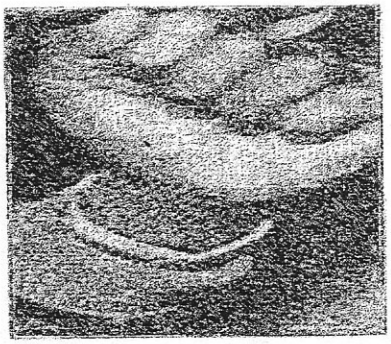
ABOLISHING CAPITALISM BY SMASHING WINDOWS?

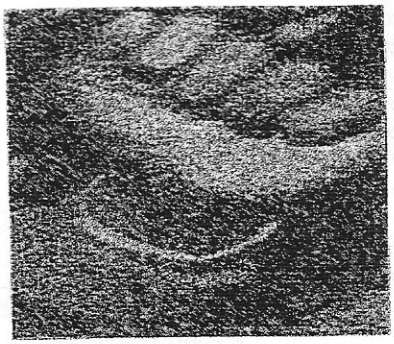
The good thing about this pretty harmless "violence" against capitalist property is that it is a direct form of resistance to capitalism. It is direct because it is unmediated by any representative. It is people taking action themselves in the here and now, rather than relying upon someone else to do something for them in the future. Smashing windows of capitalist businesses, to some extent, smashes the veneer of the spectacle of capitalism. However, as we all know, capitalism will not be abolished by smashing a few windows on spectacular global days of action against capitalism. Capitalists will simply replace the windows and go on as before. To abolish capitalism, we need to create a grassroots working class movement that will abolish all classes, a movement that is grounded in the everyday experience

of people's lives. The anti-globalisation movement has some potential in creating this, as shall be noted later.

A distinction needs to be made between violence against the private property of capitalist exploiters and against human beings. Violence against property is understandable, but violence against humans is nearly always unjustifiable, except in legitimate cases of self-defence. Anarchists do not support or practise terrorism, which aims to maim or kill innocent working class people as in the World Trade Centre attack in the USA. About a hundred years ago a few anarchists supported and practised terrorism (directed against the rich), but almost no anarchists do today, including us at *Thrall* magazine. You cannot produce a free, non-authoritarian society by terrorising, brutalising, killing and maiming.







It is a mistake to claim that anarchism equals the Black Bloc. The Black Bloc does not represent all anarchists. Many people in the Black Bloc are not anarchists. It's important to remember that it is a widely known fact that much of the violence in Genoa was committed by police provocateurs as well as fascist groups who infiltrated the Black Bloc. Even then, the majority of anarchists in Genoa did not participate in the Black Bloc, but in other marches and groups.

Much of the behind the scenes, down to earth organising at such events has been carried out by anarchist groups. For example, in protests against the World Economic Forum in Melbourne in 2000 most anarchists did not participate in the Black Bloc but instead helped organise the protest through the AWOL (Autonomous Web Of Liberation) collective, as well providing free food, medical supplies and participating in the blockade.

IS ANARCHISM VIOLENT?

The scapegoating of anarchism for violence on protests simply plays on all the false stereotypes of anarchists. So it's necessary once again to restate the "ABCs of anarchism": anarchism is not about violence, disorder or destruction; anarchists desire a society free from violence, coercion, privilege and disorder. Violence, coercion and disorder are a product of capitalism, which needs a violent police force to protect capitalist property and privilege.

The real purpose of this media driven campaign to scapegoat anarchism is to repress the anti-globalisation movement. They want to put people off the movement by claiming it is all about mindless "violence", rather than resisting capitalist power and exploitation. Capitalists fear that the anti-globalisation movement will get bigger and more radical unless it is diverted or crushed. They also want to prepare public opinion for the state's violent repression of the militant wing of the movement, the "bad protesters" like anarchists (not the nice fluffy liberals) who seek more radical aims than just a nicer version of capitalism.

HOW NON-VIOLENT IS THE CAPITALIST STATE?

The capitalist establishment is trying to derail the growing anti-globalisation movement, but not because some demonstrators are allegedly violent. Violence is not the issue. The guardians of this political and economic system do not abhor violence. On the contrary, they are the greatest purveyors of violence on the planet. For example, in the last 50 years, the USA, self-proclaimed leader of the capitalist world, has been responsible for the deaths of millions of people in wars of aggression. Korea, Vietnam, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Laos, Cambodia, Grenada, Lebanon, Libya, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama, Iraq, Angola, Somalia, Colombia, Congo and Yugoslavia have all been invaded, bombed or ravaged by US-proxy wars, with Afghanistan next on the list. Wars and invasions are dramatic expressions of the violence committed by the capitalist establishment. The US has killed well over 500,000 Iraqi children from economic sanctions, and publicly said it was "worth the price". When it comes to violence, it is hard to match the deliberate killing of 500,000 children. The US state is the biggest terrorist outfit in the world.

The capitalist state's routine use of violence is not restricted to foreign wars and interventions, either. Every worker who has gone on strike or been locked out knows that if you try to stop the bosses from using scabs and strikebreakers, you will be met with police violence, as with the pickets against Carter Holt Harvey by wharfies in the South Island.

BEYOND VIOLENCE AND NON-VIOLENCE

With all the media driven talk about "violence versus non-violence", we tend to overlook that the anti-globalisation movement has much radical, anarchist potential. For a start, the movement is largely organised along decentralised anarchist lines, a fact often completely ignored. These big protests have largely been organised without leaders by networks of autonomous groups. These groups network together, inform each other of their plans, create their own actions or join in on someone else's. A whole host of organisational forms are used, from websites listing actions, Independent Media (IndyMedia) centres, to small affinity groups.

Affinity groups are temporary groups of like-minded people who come together for a specific aim such as forming a carnival-like drum brigade. All these groups then co-ordinate their activities with one another from the bottom up at large "spokescouncil" meetings of delegates from the various groups.

It is assumed by many that what is needed is a central body to direct the protests from above. They are elitists and authoritarians who believe that some allegedly superior small group needs to decide what protesters ought to do. The success of the largely non-hierarchical organising of the anti-globalisation movement proves that such a method of organising is possible and desirable. It allows for much flexibility and diversity. People feel like they are actually participating in a protest of their own creation, rather than being herded like sheep by marshalls on loudhailers. A lack of central control does not mean every group will go off and do their own thing in antagonism with each other, as these autonomous groups have shown a real ability to come together and co-ordinate their activities in massive, large-scale demonstrations.

Imagine if a whole society, and not just a protest, was organised along such decentralised lines. People would voluntarily come together and form and re-form groups for whatever need, whether artistic or social or economic or whatever, and would co-ordinate their activities with other like-minded groups. Of course, this federalist organisation run by direct democracy is not enough by itself to create an anarchist/communist society, it is also necessary to create a real human community without all forms of domination (including classes), money, and the state.

WATCH OUT FOR RECUPERATORS!

For all its confusions and shortcomings which have been outlined in previous issues of *Thrall* (such as being anti-corporate rather than fully anti-capitalist), the importance

of the anti-globalisation movement is that it is an extra-parliamentary movement that takes direct action against many aspects of capital and the state in the streets. Heaps of people across the globe are putting their bodies on the line to blockade and directly disrupt the meetings of the international ruling class. As well, this grassroots movement is largely beyond the control of the traditional left. It's developed autonomously from political parties (leftist, rightist or green) and unions. This is important as the traditional purpose of these bureaucratic groups is to discipline the working class and/or channel dissent into reforming capitalism. As well, it's becoming a much broader movement than a few fringe activists. In Genoa, the majority of protesters were from Italy, and many of them were young workers. Genoa represented a broad social mobilisation that went far beyond the circles of "event hoppers" and adventure tourist demonstrators. As such the anti-globalisation movement has great potential to develop into a more revolutionary movement, especially if it can spread to workplaces, and can avoid by co-opted by bureaucratic Non-Governmental Organisations who aim to take the place of unions and political parties in acting against us whilst claiming to represent us.

Violence is not the issue here. It's whether the anti-capitalist movement can avoid being co-opted and repressed, as well as develop into a broader social movement that is based upon opposition to the everyday violence of the exploitative capitalist system. With globalisation, neo-liberalism, privatisation, deregulation, free trade, the New Right and all that, we are being forced to work harder, longer and for less pay, and suffering from more lay-offs, poverty and hunger worldwide, not to mention bringing the planet to the brink of an ecological crisis. Four hundred billionaires now possess wealth equal to that of the 3 billion poorest people on the planet. This capitalist system is inherently violent, oppressive and exploitative. Capitalism cannot be reformed, and that's why we need to abolish it.

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